

POLICIES AND PROGRAMS
OF THE VIETNAMESE GOVERNMENT

The documents attached to this paper are public statements of policy and programs announced recently by General Nguyen Khanh, Prime Minister of the Government of Viet-Nam, and some of his cabinet members. They are useful in providing an idea of the aims of General Khanh's Government and the means to be employed in achieving them. Brief summaries of these documents follow:

I. Text of a Reform Program Announced by
Prime Minister General Nguyen Khanh on
March 7, 1964

On March 7 General Khanh announced a broad program to mobilize the country's resources both to resist Communist aggression and rebuild the country. He promised that his government would do its best to achieve the goals of this program within one year. The program includes:

Reorganization of the Government

(a) Administration will be decentralized and simplified. The selection of civil servants and field workers will be improved in order to increase the effectiveness of government programs in rural areas.

(b) The new Rural Life Hamlet Program (formerly Strategic Hamlet Program) will be modified to avoid the injustices of the past and to proceed on a realistic basis. The principles of quality rather than quantity; proceeding from more secure to less secure areas; and equal stress on the standard of living and on security, will be followed.

(c) The government will encourage youth to work in the countryside, will improve the lot of the Combat Youth, and will provide opportunities for youth to better itself and society.

(d) Paramilitary

- 2 -

(d) Paramilitary forces and popular defense groups will be consolidated and increased. Injustices in the armed forces will be abolished, and a new system of conscription will be instituted. Programs to improve the living standards of soldiers' families will be developed.

(e) Those persons currently with the Viet Cong who rejoin the government side will be honorably received and given an opportunity to contribute to the work of the nation.

National Development

(a) Agricultural activities will be increased in order to benefit persons in rural areas by improving land legislation, easing the terms of payment and taxation, permitting squatters to use land they currently occupy on a temporary basis, and providing the population means to increase agricultural production. Private enterprise will be encouraged and the government will improve the monetary and tax systems to encourage production. Government budgeting will seek to avoid inflation.

(b) Social and educational projects will be undertaken to raise the level of education and improve the ability of the young to assume their responsibilities for developing the country. Student associations will be created in the schools, and teachers and students will be encouraged to make contact with the rural population.

(c) Public health activities must be directed more toward the countryside. Village and hamlet dispensaries will be increased, provincial surgical wards will be established, and a National Health Council will be organized.

(d) Councils for social improvement will be established at the village and hamlet level, to guide the people in rural rehabilitation.

(e) A revolutionary court began operation in March to try persons accused of criminal activities under the old regime.

- 3 -

regime. Remaining unjust laws will be abolished.

(f) The government's policy is to create sincere and efficient collaboration between management and labor. The inequitable system of labor contracting will be abolished, and social security measures will be devised.

International Activities

The government intends to strengthen and expand its relations with friendly countries, particularly those in similar circumstances. It will try to re-establish relations with its neighbors, Laos and Cambodia. On the other hand, the government will be firm with those countries that promote policies or activities detrimental to the nation. The program notes that Vietnamese-American relations continue to grow closer.

Politics and Religion

Open political activities will be encouraged, and a statute governing political groups and associations will be made public.

The government confirms that freedom of belief is a basic, inviolable right of all Vietnamese.

The Government pledges to improve the living standards of its ethnic minorities, preserving their age-old traditions while at the same time offering them opportunities to participate in the work of developing the nation.

II. Weekly Radio Addresses by Prime Minister, General Nguyen Khanh, April 4 and 11, 1964

In two radio broadcasts to the Vietnamese people ("fireside chats"), General Khanh told the entire Vietnamese people his plans and aspirations for the country. He noted that "it is my duty and privilege to talk intimately with you compatriots over the radio and to report to you what my government has done, is doing, and

will do

- 4 -

will do to meet the rightful aspirations of all people for order, prosperity and happiness." He said that two problems face Viet-Nam at the present moment; fighting off the attack from the Communist North and rebuilding a country and society torn by war. The Military Revolutionary Council, he said, had taken an oath to devote itself to the service of the nation and people and further the aims of the revolution. A large-scale plan was being implemented to bring peace to the countryside, alleviate the burdens on the rural population, and construct schools, provide medicines, and distribute agricultural tools in order to reach the rural people who are suffering the consequences of Communist invasion.

In his second speech on April 11, General Khanh said he had been seeking a way to help people in the countryside express their thoughts and feelings. More than twenty years of war had destroyed much of the country built by the forbears of today's Vietnamese. General Khanh said he was saddened by the ravages of war on the people and regretted that on a few occasions innocent people near battle areas had been hurt by troops engaged with the Viet Cong.

In order to establish direct communication with the people to redress wrongs and hear their aspirations, he said that he was setting up an organ called the General Office for People's Suggestions and Complaints. It was to be "a link between me and every citizen in the whole country." He urged his listeners to be full of hope and confidence in the future of the country.

III. Radio Addresses by Mr. Nguyen Ton Hoan, Vice Prime Minister for Pacification

In a series of three radio talks, Vice Prime Minister for Pacification Nguyen Ton Hoan described the nature of the war in Viet-Nam and of the means the government would employ to win it.

In the first talk on March 21, Hoan said that in the current situation the government is dependent on popular support. He was making this talk in order that the people could understand and support what the government was doing.

He said

- 5 -

He said the current unhappy situation has been brought on by "the Viet Cong and Communists' voluntary and firm decision to bring the war to South Viet-Nam." He further said his compatriots currently with the Viet Cong, however, should not be hated but won back. Most persons with the Viet Cong are misguided, abused and exploited by a minority of Communists. The latter are the country's enemies.

Hoan noted that Viet Cong propaganda now called for peace and a cease-fire, but that the Communist side simultaneously was increasing its "destructive and murderous activities". Despite this, he said "we will make every effort to create favorable conditions for the building of basic organizations for a genuinely free and democratic regime."

In his second talk on March 28, Hoan told his listeners that freedom must be fought for and constantly safeguarded by all the people or it will be lost. Politics are the concern of everyone. The government has as its duty the maintenance of freedom, but it would be wrong for people to believe they could have freedom without struggling for it. "I admit that the revolutionary government has the duty of guaranteeing the freedom of compatriots, but we must not forget that our country is actually 'building' freedom, an enterprise which requires the participation of the entire population."

In his third talk on April 12, Hoan spoke particularly to the soldiers fighting the war. He praised their sacrifices, and noted that at present most of the responsibility for restoring security rests with them. However, he asked the soldiers to examine their role and realize the war cannot be won just by fighting. Soldiers must also strive to win the people's hearts. They must study the nature of Communism and keep up with national and international events, so that they can understand and refute Communist propaganda. Soldiers must, by their behavior and politeness to the people, win their hearts. In short, "our soldiers must fight this war in all fields, using both weapons and political knowledge."

IV. Excerpts

IV. Excerpts from a Press Conference on April 13, 1964,
by General Khanh and Cabinet Members

In a press conference April 12 General Khanh refuted charges that he aimed at establishing himself as a dictator. Deputy Prime Minister Hoan, a leading Dai Viet party member, said his party was solidly behind the Government. Khanh said persons accused of criminal activities for the Diem Government would be tried promptly and with due process of law.

V. Radio Address by Nguyen Xuan Oanh, Vice Prime
Minister for National Finance and Economy,
Delivered April 18, 1964

On April 18, Vice Prime Minister Oanh spoke over Saigon Radio on the economic plans and goals of the Government. Noting that the new Government held itself responsible to the people, and that it intended to realize an economic revolution, he said the following points would be carried out:

A. Rural people, who have borne the major burden of hardship in the war, will be provided the means for building a new life. They will be helped in raising agricultural production for export, in order to generate the foreign exchange necessary to purchase capital equipment for industrialization.

B. Private capital will be mobilized to provide more employment, and savings will be encouraged. Commodity prices will be raised to enable the people to invest money in enterprises, as is done in other countries.

C. The monetary and financial system will be stabilized, and the Government will fight inflation. Taxes will be reformed.

In conclusion Oanh noted, "I conceive it my duty to create all favorable conditions to bring to the compatriots higher income, a more comfortable material life, and happiness in their daily lives."